

AC 4496

13 MAR 1967

13 MAR 1967



ANNUAL REPORT 1960

OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES
AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

4C.2296

DRAFT COPY



**ANNUAL
REPORT
1960**

**OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES
AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE**

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE
SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE
SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR 1960

E. L. RUSSELL, *Chief Education Officer*

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 1960

MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE

MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MRS. D. M. FISHER
(*Chairman* 1960/61).
COUNCILLOR MRS. F. M.
SMALLWOOD (*Chairman* 1959/60).
COUNCILLOR MRS. S. A. SMITH.
COUNCILLOR MRS. E. SMITHERMAN.
MISS J. DAVID.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR A. T. WALKER.
(1960/61)
COUNCILLOR MRS. H. RADFORD.
(1959/60)

HEADS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS FOR EDUCATIONALLY SUBNORMAL PUPILS

MR. S. S. ALDERSON.
MR. B. C. BUCKLEY.
MISS H. CHARNLEY (from January,
1960).
MISS D. M. EDWARDS.
MR. G. W. EVANS.
MR. G. H. MEEK.
MISS B. M. SMITH.
MR. A. E. TANSLEY, B.Sc., M.Ed.
MISS G. L. VAUGHAN.

OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS

MISS D. E. NEWMAN.

AFTER-CARE STAFF

<i>After-Care Officer</i>	MRS. J. M. FULFORD, B.A.
<i>After-Care Visitors</i>	MRS. H. K. FINCH. MISS S. D. BIBBY, M.A. MRS. K. WILLIAMS. MISS L. SMITH.

JUNIOR SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRE STAFF

<i>Organiser of Special Training Centres</i>	MISS N. L. CHRISTIE.
CENTRE	SUPERVISOR
<i>Erdington</i>	MISS W. M. LUCK (resigned 31.10.60.)
<i>Glebe Farm</i>	MISS M. L. BEINDER.
<i>Hobmoor</i>	MRS. G. CASSELLS.
<i>Kingstanding</i>	MISS O. M. WOOLLEY.
<i>St. Paul's</i>	MISS E. LAMB.
<i>Weoley Castle</i>	MRS. M. HILL.
<i>Wretham Road</i>	MRS. E. A. COOKSEY.

SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRES FOR SENIOR BOYS

<i>Bell Barn</i>	MR. R. C. SLACK.
<i>Moseley Road</i>	MR. J. E. LAMB (died 25.2.60).

FOR SENIOR GIRLS

<i>Bell Barn</i>	MRS. M. B. BUSBY.
------------------------	-------------------

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Special Services After-Care Sub-Committee

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1960

INTRODUCTION

The Special Services After-Care Sub-Committee of the City Education Committee have pleasure in presenting their sixtieth annual report.

This jubilee happily coincides with Mental Health Year and with the coming into force of the Mental Health Act of 1959.

This Act is now the statutory basis for the provision both of the after-care service and of special training centres in which the Education Committee act as the agents of the Health Committee. The cost of special training centres is borne in full by the Health Committee ; the cost of after-care is divided equally between the estimates of the Health Committee and of the Education Committee.

So far as the After-Care Sub-Committee are concerned the main change in the letter of the law is the removal of the distinction between the "statutory supervision" of children reported incapable of education at school or requiring supervision after leaving school and the "voluntary supervision" of subnormal special school pupils not so reported ; all children unsuitable for education at school and all former educationally subnormal pupils are now visited and supervised on a voluntary footing. The tables at the end of this report are generally comparable with those of previous years provided that the figures for statutory and voluntary cases in earlier tables are added together.

One change of procedure may be worth mentioning. The letter telling parents that it is proposed to record a decision that a child is unsuitable for education at school and telling them in what other ways the Council may be able to help the child and his family is framed after consultation between medical and administrative officers of the Education and Public Health Departments including the After-Care Officer and the Organiser of Special Training Centres ; this letter is not now sent through the post but is given, and explained to the parents by the after-care visitor who will become responsible for visiting the child and his family.

Occupation Centres have been redesignated "Special Training Centres".

VISITING

There were 268 new cases in 1960 ; the total number under supervision during the year was 1,612 ; 401 young people were discharged from supervision during the year ; the case load at the end of the year was, therefore, 1,411.

Those young people recommended for discharge by the After-Care Sub-Committee are shown in Table II(J) and analysed into age groups in Table III : those transferred to the supervision of the Health Committee are shown in Table II(K) ; those who died during the year in Table IV and the causes of death ; the type of work followed by those gainfully employed in Table V.

The After-Care Sub-Committee have welcomed the emphasis which has been given in the report of the Royal Commission on Mental Illness and Mental Deficiency, in Parliament, during the debates on the Mental Health Act, and throughout the country during Mental Health Year, to the value of caring for mentally subnormal persons as far as possible in the community and to placing their admission to psychiatric hospitals as far as possible on the same informal footing as the admission to hospitals of other patients with other medical needs. It has always been the purpose of the after-care service to give to subnormal persons and their families the kind of support which will enable them to continue to live successfully in the community ; the Sub-Committee draw attention to the value of this solution in their report for 1950. The After-Care Sub-Committee accept the definition of social case work suggested by Great Britain to a recent International Conference on Social Work, viz :

“A personal service provided by qualified workers for individuals who require skilled assistance in resolving some material, emotional, or character problem. It is a disciplined activity which requires a full appreciation of the needs of the client in his family and community setting. The caseworker seeks to perform this service on a basis of mutual trust and in such ways as will strengthen the client's own capacities to deal with his problems and to achieve a better adjustment with his environment.”

To develop the knowledge, understanding, and manual skills of subnormal children is of course mainly a function of the special school or of the special training centre. Both are also concerned with the development of character—not what the child knows but what sort of person he or she is and will become—and especially with social adjustment—with how he or she gets on with other people. The after-care visitor is mainly concerned with this development of character, judgment, and social adjustment. The Visitor is concerned, that is to say, with the adjustment at home of children attending special training centres and with the adjustment at home and at work of young people who have left special schools or training centres. At the age of 16 the social adjustment of a sub-normal child, outside the protective environment of special school or centre, is often quite rudimentary and his or her adjustment at work still lies ahead. It follows that the amount of individual study and help required in difficult cases and in cases where the parents are seriously inadequate, is substantial ; indeed, it is often formidable. Assuming that visitors have the personal qualities and professional skill which their work demands, the largest single factor in making the service effective is that each visitor's case-load should be reasonably manageable.

The transfer to the supervision of the Officers of the Health Committee of all persons over 21 (and of some young people aged between 18 and 21

who will need supervision indefinitely) has reduced the case load to just over 1,400. Moreover, though there were only four visitors throughout 1960, a vacancy for a fifth has since been filled. Even so, each Visitor has still a case load of not much less than three hundred mentally subnormal children and young people. Social case work is not an exact science but experience in the nature of the work, the amount of travelling involved, and the high level of employment (which often makes it difficult to find both the young person and his parents at home) does suggest that ideally the aim should be a case-load of about half the present size and that some reduction should be made as soon as this is practicable. The Sub-Committee note with satisfaction that a training course for social case workers, on the lines recommended by the Younghusband Committee, is to be established in Birmingham in 1961.

EMPLOYMENT

Of the men and boys under supervision in 1960, 57% were gainfully employed ; of the women and girls, 46% were employed, including a large proportion engaged in household duties. The comparable figures for 1959 were 56% and 46% respectively.

SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRES

During 1960 the Sub-Committee maintained seven junior centres with 250 places for boys and girls aged 5 to 16. At the end of the year there were 67 names on the waiting list. The Sub-Committee also maintained two senior centres for boys and men and one for girls and women with no upper age limit. A total of 200 attended—most of them part-time only—and the waiting list at the end of the year was 125 including 50 children at junior centres who were due for promotion.

It will be appreciated that waiting lists of this order mean long delays in admitting children, some of whose homes are labouring under the greatest difficulties ; they also mean that children of five or six who are ready to profit by attending a junior centre have commonly to be kept waiting and that older children who prove unsuitable for education in a special school have sometimes to be excluded from school before a vacancy can be found for them in special training centres.

It is therefore a matter of great encouragement that at the end of 1960 plans were well advanced for the transfer of senior boys and men from the Moseley Road and Bell Barn centres to a new senior centre in Aldridge Road. This centre, administered directly by the Health Committee through the Public Health Department, now provides not only more places but better and more varied opportunities for training and for work on sheltered workshop lines. The whole of Bell Barn premises are now available for older girls and women (about 100 places instead of 50) so that all or most of them can be admitted full-time and there can be similar development in their training and employment. Before the end of 1960, moreover, work had started, in the Fox Hollies area, on the first of the new junior centres. Its opening, in perhaps a year's time, will have a most beneficial effect on waiting lists and waiting times in South and East

Birmingham and there will be two other major advantages. First, there will be a special unit for a small number of children who are so handicapped that the existing junior centres cannot admit them at all but who would themselves benefit from specialised care in a "purpose built" centre and whose families would be greatly helped by their admission. Secondly, the new centres, for about 50 children in four groups (including the special unit), will allow a much more satisfactory classification of children and a more progressive promotion from one group to another.

The After-Care Sub-Committee and the staff of the Centres have long been aware of the need for improvements of this kind and these needs have received special emphasis in the year 1960. The new Mental Health Act has emphasised the need for a more positive and more ambitious approach to the problems of mental subnormality. This is reflected in the new name "Special Training Centres" which has taken the place of the old term "Occupation Centres." Again, Dr. Tizard of the Maudsley hospital has demonstrated, in an experimental unit at Reigate, how much more can be done for severely subnormal children than has been generally appreciated. A group of children aged 5 to 12 who had been inmates of a mental deficiency hospital were brought together to live as a large family group and to be trained by modified nursery school methods. In two years all of them showed extraordinary progress in their social and personal development. This experiment, which was supported financially by the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, confirmed what many workers in this field had already proved for themselves. Modified nursery school methods have been used with success in a number of the Sub-Committee's centres but this development has been limited by the inadequacy of the accommodation.

Children living in the community and attending day centres develop personally and emotionally more successfully than children who have had to be "hospitalized." Whatever their "mental ages" in terms of I.Q., they need in many ways to be treated appropriately to their chronological ages and to grow up alongside their normal siblings ; they are themselves conscious of this need. At 15 or 16 the majority of them are keen "to go to work." The introduction, during 1960, of simple and suitable outwork (such as carding of hair curlers) at the Bell Barn Senior Girls' centre proved an unqualified success. Almost all the girls and women are capable of undertaking some work and in their own eyes they have achieved the status of workers. Their greatest satisfaction has perhaps been seeing the carded curlers on sale in shops and stores and to this has been added the satisfaction of taking home a small pay packet. It has been agreed that the profits shall be distributed among the girls on the basis simply of the number of hours' work which they have done ; that is, without regard to their very different speeds of work. So far these earnings have not in any case amounted to more than about £1 a month and this has not affected the family's entitlement to Family Allowances or National Assistance, nor has it given rise to any insurance problems ; at the same time, the pay packet, however small, does give a subnormal girl a new sense of independence and she is a mentally healthier person for it.

During the year each centre held an open day when there were opportunities for councillors, parents, and other interested members of the public to visit, to look at the things which the children had made and to see that they were in fact being trained and not just occupied.

On the social side there were the usual outings to seaside or country, Christmas parties, and visits to the Pantomime or the Circus. With financial assistance from the authority a party of older girls spent a week in a seaside hostel at Fairbourne and two parties of older boys and one from a junior centre spent a week at the National Association of Mixed and Girls' Clubs' Centre outside Birmingham, Windmill House.

TRAINING OF STAFF

During the year one Assistant Supervisor from a junior centre and one from a senior centre have been seconded on salary to take a one-year full time course leading to the Diploma of the National Association of Mental Health. The association has also established in Birmingham its first full-time course specially for the staff of senior centres and the education committee have been glad to co-operate with the association in providing this training.

TRAINING AT HOME

During the year 68 children and young people received a weekly visit of one hour from a home teacher. Some of them are permanently unable to attend training centres but the majority will be admitted to a centre at a later stage ; when they are themselves ready for admission, when their parents' misgivings can be overcome, or when a place is available. These weekly sessions, though far from adequate, if compared with full time training at a centre, are very much better than nothing. They help to prepare the younger children so that their adjustment on admission to a centre is quicker and better. Much of the home teacher's help is given indirectly through a child's parents, who can often be helped to understand how to care for him, train him, and keep him happily occupied. Those who are housebound are, if possible, provided with hand crafts or other suitable occupations and they look forward with pleasure to the teacher's weekly visit.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The After-Care Sub-Committee and their officers would like once again to offer their thanks to their many colleagues and friends who share their faith in their work, help in its execution, and contribute to its success.

The Sub-Committee record with regret the death of the late Miss F. A. Barlow, formerly Head of the Amblecote Special School and a Member of the Sub-Committee, the death of Mr. J. E. Lamb, for ten years Supervisor of the Moseley Road Senior Boys' Centre, and the retirement of Miss W. M. Luck, for eleven years Supervisors of Erdington Junior Centre, whose work as Supervisors had earned them both the sincere gratitude of the families of the children for whom they did so much.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF CASES ON VISITING LIST DURING 1960

	A		B		C		D		E		F		
	At home and gainfully employed		At home and not gainfully employed		In H.M. Forces		In Homes and Hospitals		In Prison, Borstal or Approved School		Total, categories A—E		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. and F.
1. Reported (on leaving school) during 1960 for Supervision:	100	71	14	14	—	—	—	—	1	—	115	85	200
2. Reported (on leaving school) before 1960 for Supervision:	431	241	60	133*	2	—	2	—	17	1	512	375	887
3. Excluded from school during 1960	—	—	42	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	42	26	68
4. Excluded from school before 1960	2	1	262	192	—	—	—	—	—	—	264	193	457
5. Totals, 1960	533	313	378	365	2	—	2	—	18	1	933	679	1,612
6. Totals, 1959	599	343	385	374	7	—	37	25	31	1	1,059	743	1,802

*In Line 2, Col.B(f), "133" includes 71 engaged in household duties.

TABLE II
SUMMARY OF CASES REMOVED FROM VISITING LIST IN 1960

	G		H		J		K		L		M		N		P		
	Admitted to Psychiatric Hospitals		Further Contact Impossible		Discharged by Case Committee		Transferred to supervn. by Health Committee		Died		Referred to other Authorities		Discharged under Education (Misc. Prov.) Act, 1948		M.	F.	Total, categories G-N
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M and F.
1. Reported (on leaving school) during 1960 for Supervision	2	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	4	6
2. Reported (on leaving school) before 1960 for Supervision	6	1	26	10	157	85	7	6	3	2	—	—	—	—	199	104	303
3. Excluded from school during 1960	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
4. Excluded from school before 1960	15	7	—	2	16	3	23	8	4	1	2	4	2	1	62	26	88
5. Totals, 1960	25	12	26	12	173	88	30	14	9	3	2	4	2	1	267	134	401
6. Totals, 1959	26	12	10	14	297	130	101	65	7	5	3	3	—	1	444	230	674

TABLE III

(See Table II, Columns "J" and "N")

CASES DISCHARGED IN 1960 AS NOT NEEDING FURTHER SUPERVISION

Age Groups	Supervision		Excluded		Total	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
21 years or less	115	61	11	3	126	64
22—26 years or less	30	12	5	1	35	13
27—35 years or less	7	5	2	—	9	5
Over 35 years	5	7	—	—	5	7
TOTALS	157	85	18	4	175	89

TABLE IV

(See Table II, Column "L")

DIED IN 1960

Age Groups	Supervision		Excluded	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
16 years and under	1	—	4	3
17—21 years	1	—	—	—
22—30 years	1	—	—	—
30—50 years	1	—	1	—
Over 50 years	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	4	—	5	3

The causes of death were as follows :—

- 1 from carcinoma of lung.
- 5 from general deterioration of condition.
- 1 from heart and liver weakness.
- 1 from perforated gastric ulcer.
- 1 from pneumonia.
- 1 drowned in accident.
- 2 after severe epileptic fits.

TABLE V
TYPE OF WORK FOLLOWED BY THOSE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED

<i>Type of Work</i>	<i>Reported during 1960 for Supervision</i>		<i>Reported before 1960 for Supervision</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Assembling and Packing	10	19	24	41	34	60
Bakeries, Breweries and Food Manufacture	4	9	20	39	24	48
Boot Repairing	7	—	7	—	14	—
Building and Decorating	7	—	34	—	41	—
Cinema and Entertainments	—	—	2	3	2	3
Clerical work	—	1	—	—	—	1
Delivery and Sales	9	4	26	1	35	5
Factory work	28	16	194	94	222	110
Farming — gardening — groundsmen	2	—	9	—	11	—
Hotel, Cafe and Canteen work	—	—	4	7	4	7
Domestic work — Sewing	—	10	1	25	1	35
Public Services, Gas, Elec- tricity, Transport, Salvage, etc.	—	—	9	—	9	—
Laundry	—	3	1	9	1	12
Outwork — Remploy	—	—	1	1	1	1
Warehouse	2	4	23	2	25	6
Woodwork	9	—	18	—	27	—
Window cleaning	—	—	5	—	5	—
Porters, Labourers and odd jobs	10	—	53	2	63	2
Maintenance	5	—	9	—	14	—
Miscellaneous,— Jewellery, Upholstery, etc.	7	5	11	17	18	22
TOTALS	100	71	451	241	551	312



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

With the Compliments of the
Chief Education Officer

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE
SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE
SUB-COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR 1960

E. L. RUSSELL, *Chief Education Officer*

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR 1960

MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL SERVICES AFTER-CARE SUB-COMMITTEE

MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MRS. D. M. FISHER
(*Chairman* 1960/61).
COUNCILLOR MRS. F. M.
SMALLWOOD (*Chairman* 1959/60).
COUNCILLOR MRS. S. A. SMITH.
COUNCILLOR MRS. E. SMITHERMAN.
MISS J. DAVID.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE

COUNCILLOR A. T. WALKER.
(1960/61)
COUNCILLOR MRS. H. RADFORD.
(1959/60)

HEADS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS FOR EDUCATIONALLY SUBNORMAL PUPILS

MR. S. S. ALDERSON.
MR. B. C. BUCKLEY.
MISS H. CHARNLEY (from January,
1960).
MISS D. M. EDWARDS.
MR. G. W. EVANS.
MR. G. H. MEEK.
MISS B. M. SMITH.
MR. A. E. TANSLEY, B.Sc., M.Ed.
MISS G. L. VAUGHAN.

OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS

MISS D. E. NEWMAN.

AFTER-CARE STAFF

<i>After-Care Officer</i>	MRS. J. M. FULFORD, B.A.
<i>After-Care Visitors</i>	MRS. H. K. FINCH. MISS S. D. BIBBY, M.A. MRS. K. WILLIAMS. MISS L. SMITH.

JUNIOR SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRE STAFF

<i>Organiser of Special Training Centres</i>	MISS N. L. CHRISTIE.
CENTRE	SUPERVISOR
<i>Erdington</i>	MISS W. M. LUCK (resigned 31.10.60.)
<i>Glebe Farm</i>	MISS M. L. BEINDER.
<i>Hobmoor</i>	MRS. G. CASSELLS.
<i>Kingstanding</i>	MISS O. M. WOOLLEY.
<i>St. Paul's</i>	MISS E. LAMB.
<i>Weoley Castle</i>	MRS. M. HILL.
<i>Wretham Road</i>	MRS. E. A. COOKSEY.

SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRES FOR SENIOR BOYS

<i>Bell Barn</i>	MR. R. C. SLACK.
<i>Moseley Road</i>	MR. J. E. LAMB (died 25.2.60).

FOR SENIOR GIRLS

<i>Bell Barn</i>	MRS. M. B. BUSBY.
------------------------	-------------------

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Special Services After-Care Sub-Committee

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1960

INTRODUCTION

The Special Services After-Care Sub-Committee of the City Education Committee have pleasure in presenting their sixtieth annual report.

This jubilee happily coincides with Mental Health Year and with the coming into force of the Mental Health Act of 1959.

This Act is now the statutory basis for the provision both of the after-care service and of special training centres in which the Education Committee act as the agents of the Health Committee. The cost of special training centres is borne in full by the Health Committee ; the cost of after-care is divided equally between the estimates of the Health Committee and of the Education Committee.

So far as the After-Care Sub-Committee are concerned the main change in the letter of the law is the removal of the distinction between the "statutory supervision" of children reported incapable of education at school or requiring supervision after leaving school and the "voluntary supervision" of subnormal special school pupils not so reported ; all children unsuitable for education at school and all former educationally subnormal pupils are now visited and supervised on a voluntary footing. The tables at the end of this report are generally comparable with those of previous years provided that the figures for statutory and voluntary cases in earlier tables are added together.

One change of procedure may be worth mentioning. The letter telling parents that it is proposed to record a decision that a child is unsuitable for education at school and telling them in what other ways the Council may be able to help the child and his family is framed after consultation between medical and administrative officers of the Education and Public Health Departments including the After-Care Officer and the Organiser of Special Training Centres ; this letter is not now sent through the post but is given, and explained to the parents by the after-care visitor who will become responsible for visiting the child and his family.

Occupation Centres have been redesignated "Special Training Centres".

VISITING

There were 268 new cases in 1960 ; the total number under supervision during the year was 1,612 ; 401 young people were discharged from supervision during the year ; the case load at the end of the year was, therefore, 1,411.

Those young people recommended for discharge by the After-Care Sub-Committee are shown in Table II(J) and analysed into age groups in Table III : those transferred to the supervision of the Health Committee are shown in Table II(K) ; those who died during the year in Table IV and the causes of death ; the type of work followed by those gainfully employed in Table V.

The After-Care Sub-Committee have welcomed the emphasis which has been given in the report of the Royal Commission on Mental Illness and Mental Deficiency, in Parliament, during the debates on the Mental Health Act, and throughout the country during Mental Health Year, to the value of caring for mentally subnormal persons as far as possible in the community and to placing their admission to psychiatric hospitals as far as possible on the same informal footing as the admission to hospitals of other patients with other medical needs. It has always been the purpose of the after-care service to give to subnormal persons and their families the kind of support which will enable them to continue to live successfully in the community ; the Sub-Committee draw attention to the value of this solution in their report for 1950. The After-Care Sub-Committee accept the definition of social case work suggested by Great Britain to a recent International Conference on Social Work, viz :

“A personal service provided by qualified workers for individuals who require skilled assistance in resolving some material, emotional, or character problem. It is a disciplined activity which requires a full appreciation of the needs of the client in his family and community setting. The caseworker seeks to perform this service on a basis of mutual trust and in such ways as will strengthen the client's own capacities to deal with his problems and to achieve a better adjustment with his environment.”

To develop the knowledge, understanding, and manual skills of subnormal children is of course mainly a function of the special school or of the special training centre. Both are also concerned with the development of character—not what the child knows but what sort of person he or she is and will become—and especially with social adjustment—with how he or she gets on with other people. The after-care visitor is mainly concerned with this development of character, judgment, and social adjustment. The Visitor is concerned, that is to say, with the adjustment at home of children attending special training centres and with the adjustment at home and at work of young people who have left special schools or training centres. At the age of 16 the social adjustment of a sub-normal child, outside the protective environment of special school or centre, is often quite rudimentary and his or her adjustment at work still lies ahead. It follows that the amount of individual study and help required in difficult cases and in cases where the parents are seriously inadequate, is substantial ; indeed, it is often formidable. Assuming that visitors have the personal qualities and professional skill which their work demands, the largest single factor in making the service effective is that each visitor's case-load should be reasonably manageable.

The transfer to the supervision of the Officers of the Health Committee of all persons over 21 (and of some young people aged between 18 and 21

who will need supervision indefinitely) has reduced the case load to just over 1,400. Moreover, though there were only four visitors throughout 1960, a vacancy for a fifth has since been filled. Even so, each Visitor has still a case load of not much less than three hundred mentally subnormal children and young people. Social case work is not an exact science but experience in the nature of the work, the amount of travelling involved, and the high level of employment (which often makes it difficult to find both the young person and his parents at home) does suggest that ideally the aim should be a case-load of about half the present size and that some reduction should be made as soon as this is practicable. The Sub-Committee note with satisfaction that a training course for social case workers, on the lines recommended by the Younghusband Committee, is to be established in Birmingham in 1961.

EMPLOYMENT

Of the men and boys under supervision in 1960, 57% were gainfully employed ; of the women and girls, 46% were employed, including a large proportion engaged in household duties. The comparable figures for 1959 were 56% and 46% respectively.

SPECIAL TRAINING CENTRES

During 1960 the Sub-Committee maintained seven junior centres with 250 places for boys and girls aged 5 to 16. At the end of the year there were 67 names on the waiting list. The Sub-Committee also maintained two senior centres for boys and men and one for girls and women with no upper age limit. A total of 200 attended—most of them part-time only—and the waiting list at the end of the year was 125 including 50 children at junior centres who were due for promotion.

It will be appreciated that waiting lists of this order mean long delays in admitting children, some of whose homes are labouring under the greatest difficulties ; they also mean that children of five or six who are ready to profit by attending a junior centre have commonly to be kept waiting and that older children who prove unsuitable for education in a special school have sometimes to be excluded from school before a vacancy can be found for them in special training centres.

It is therefore a matter of great encouragement that at the end of 1960 plans were well advanced for the transfer of senior boys and men from the Moseley Road and Bell Barn centres to a new senior centre in Aldridge Road. This centre, administered directly by the Health Committee through the Public Health Department, now provides not only more places but better and more varied opportunities for training and for work on sheltered workshop lines. The whole of Bell Barn premises are now available for older girls and women (about 100 places instead of 50) so that all or most of them can be admitted full-time and there can be similar development in their training and employment. Before the end of 1960, moreover, work had started, in the Fox Hollies area, on the first of the new junior centres. Its opening, in perhaps a year's time, will have a most beneficial effect on waiting lists and waiting times in South and East

Birmingham and there will be two other major advantages. First, there will be a special unit for a small number of children who are so handicapped that the existing junior centres cannot admit them at all but who would themselves benefit from specialised care in a "purpose built" centre and whose families would be greatly helped by their admission. Secondly, the new centres, for about 50 children in four groups (including the special unit), will allow a much more satisfactory classification of children and a more progressive promotion from one group to another.

The After-Care Sub-Committee and the staff of the Centres have long been aware of the need for improvements of this kind and these needs have received special emphasis in the year 1960. The new Mental Health Act has emphasised the need for a more positive and more ambitious approach to the problems of mental subnormality. This is reflected in the new name "Special Training Centres" which has taken the place of the old term "Occupation Centres." Again, Dr. Tizard of the Maudsley hospital has demonstrated, in an experimental unit at Reigate, how much more can be done for severely subnormal children than has been generally appreciated. A group of children aged 5 to 12 who had been inmates of a mental deficiency hospital were brought together to live as a large family group and to be trained by modified nursery school methods. In two years all of them showed extraordinary progress in their social and personal development. This experiment, which was supported financially by the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children, confirmed what many workers in this field had already proved for themselves. Modified nursery school methods have been used with success in a number of the Sub-Committee's centres but this development has been limited by the inadequacy of the accommodation.

Children living in the community and attending day centres develop personally and emotionally more successfully than children who have had to be "hospitalized." Whatever their "mental ages" in terms of I.Q., they need in many ways to be treated appropriately to their chronological ages and to grow up alongside their normal siblings ; they are themselves conscious of this need. At 15 or 16 the majority of them are keen "to go to work." The introduction, during 1960, of simple and suitable outwork (such as carding of hair curlers) at the Bell Barn Senior Girls' centre proved an unqualified success. Almost all the girls and women are capable of undertaking some work and in their own eyes they have achieved the status of workers. Their greatest satisfaction has perhaps been seeing the carded curlers on sale in shops and stores and to this has been added the satisfaction of taking home a small pay packet. It has been agreed that the profits shall be distributed among the girls on the basis simply of the number of hours' work which they have done ; that is, without regard to their very different speeds of work. So far these earnings have not in any case amounted to more than about £1 a month and this has not affected the family's entitlement to Family Allowances or National Assistance, nor has it given rise to any insurance problems ; at the same time, the pay packet, however small, does give a subnormal girl a new sense of independence and she is a mentally healthier person for it.

During the year each centre held an open day when there were opportunities for councillors, parents, and other interested members of the public to visit, to look at the things which the children had made and to see that they were in fact being trained and not just occupied.

On the social side there were the usual outings to seaside or country, Christmas parties, and visits to the Pantomime or the Circus. With financial assistance from the authority a party of older girls spent a week in a seaside hostel at Fairbourne and two parties of older boys and one from a junior centre spent a week at the National Association of Mixed and Girls' Clubs' Centre outside Birmingham, Windmill House.

TRAINING OF STAFF

During the year one Assistant Supervisor from a junior centre and one from a senior centre have been seconded on salary to take a one-year full time course leading to the Diploma of the National Association of Mental Health. The association has also established in Birmingham its first full-time course specially for the staff of senior centres and the education committee have been glad to co-operate with the association in providing this training.

TRAINING AT HOME

During the year 68 children and young people received a weekly visit of one hour from a home teacher. Some of them are permanently unable to attend training centres but the majority will be admitted to a centre at a later stage ; when they are themselves ready for admission, when their parents' misgivings can be overcome, or when a place is available. These weekly sessions, though far from adequate, if compared with full time training at a centre, are very much better than nothing. They help to prepare the younger children so that their adjustment on admission to a centre is quicker and better. Much of the home teacher's help is given indirectly through a child's parents, who can often be helped to understand how to care for him, train him, and keep him happily occupied. Those who are housebound are, if possible, provided with hand crafts or other suitable occupations and they look forward with pleasure to the teacher's weekly visit.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The After-Care Sub-Committee and their officers would like once again to offer their thanks to their many colleagues and friends who share their faith in their work, help in its execution, and contribute to its success.

The Sub-Committee record with regret the death of the late Miss F. A. Barlow, formerly Head of the Amblecote Special School and a Member of the Sub-Committee, the death of Mr. J. E. Lamb, for ten years Supervisor of the Moseley Road Senior Boys' Centre, and the retirement of Miss W. M. Luck, for eleven years Supervisors of Erdington Junior Centre, whose work as Supervisors had earned them both the sincere gratitude of the families of the children for whom they did so much.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF CASES ON VISITING LIST DURING 1960

	A		B		C		D		E		F		
	At home and gainfully employed		At home and not gainfully employed		In H.M. Forces		In Homes and Hospitals		In Prison, Borstal or Approved School		M.	F.	Total, categories A—E
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M. and F.
1. Reported (on leaving school) during 1960 for Supervision:	100	71	14	14	—	—	—	—	1	—	115	85	200
2. Reported (on leaving school) before 1960 for Supervision:	431	241	60	133*	2	—	2	—	17	1	512	375	887
3. Excluded from school during 1960	—	—	42	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	42	26	68
4. Excluded from school before 1960	2	1	262	192	—	—	—	—	—	—	264	193	457
5. Totals, 1960	533	313	378	365	2	—	2	—	18	1	933	679	1,612
6. Totals, 1959	599	343	385	374	7	—	37	25	31	1	1,059	743	1,802

*In Line 2, Col.B(f), "133" includes 71 engaged in household duties.

TABLE II
SUMMARY OF CASES REMOVED FROM VISITING LIST IN 1960

	G		H		J		K		L		M		N		P		
	Admitted to Psychiatric Hospitals		Further Contact Impossible		Discharged by Case Committee		Transferred to supervn. by Health Committee		Died		Referred to other Authorities		Discharged under Education (Misc. Prov.) Act, 1948		Total, categories G-N		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M and F.
1. Reported (on leaving school) during 1960 for Supervision	2	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	4	6
2. Reported (on leaving school) before 1960 for Supervision	6	1	26	10	157	85	7	6	3	2	—	—	—	—	199	104	303
3. Excluded from school during 1960	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
4. Excluded from school before 1960	15	7	—	2	16	3	23	8	4	1	2	4	2	1	62	26	88
5. Totals, 1960	25	12	26	12	173	88	30	14	9	3	2	4	2	1	267	134	401
6. Totals, 1959	26	12	10	14	297	130	101	65	7	5	3	3	—	1	444	230	674

TABLE III

(See Table II, Columns "J" and "N")

CASES DISCHARGED IN 1960 AS NOT NEEDING FURTHER SUPERVISION

<i>Age Groups</i>	<i>Supervision Cases</i>		<i>Excluded Cases</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
21 years or less	115	61	11	3	126	64
22—26 years or less	30	12	5	1	35	13
27—35 years or less	7	5	2	—	9	5
Over 35 years	5	7	—	—	5	7
TOTALS	157	85	18	4	175	89

TABLE IV

(See Table II, Column "L")

DIED IN 1960

<i>Age Groups</i>	<i>Supervision</i>		<i>Excluded</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
16 years and under	1	—	4	3
17—21 years	1	—	—	—
22—30 years	1	—	—	—
30—50 years	1	—	1	—
Over 50 years	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	4	—	5	3

The causes of death were as follows :—

- 1 from carcinoma of lung.
- 5 from general deterioration of condition.
- 1 from heart and liver weakness.
- 1 from perforated gastric ulcer.
- 1 from pneumonia.
- 1 drowned in accident.
- 2 after severe epileptic fits.

TABLE V

TYPE OF WORK FOLLOWED BY THOSE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED

<i>Type of Work</i>	<i>Reported during 1960 for Supervision</i>		<i>Reported before 1960 for Supervision</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Assembling and Packing	10	19	24	41	34	60
Bakeries, Breweries and Food Manufacture	4	9	20	39	24	48
Boot Repairing	7	—	7	—	14	—
Building and Decorating	7	—	34	—	41	—
Cinema and Entertainments	—	—	2	3	2	3
Clerical work	—	1	—	—	—	1
Delivery and Sales	9	4	26	1	35	5
Factory work	28	16	194	94	222	110
Farming — gardening — groundsmen	2	—	9	—	11	—
Hotel, Cafe and Canteen work	—	—	4	7	4	7
Domestic work — Sewing	—	10	1	25	1	35
Public Services, Gas, Elec- tricity, Transport, Salvage, etc.	—	—	9	—	9	—
Laundry	—	3	1	9	1	12
Outwork — Remploy	—	—	1	1	1	1
Warehouse	2	4	23	2	25	6
Woodwork	9	—	18	—	27	—
Window cleaning	—	—	5	—	5	—
Porters, Labourers and odd jobs	10	—	53	2	63	2
Maintenance	5	—	9	—	14	—
Miscellaneous,— Jewellery, Upholstery, etc.	7	5	11	17	18	22
TOTALS	100	71	451	241	551	312

